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KNOTTING MATTERS

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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KNOTTING MATTERS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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The editors welcome the submission of letters, articles, photographs and sketches for publication. Correspondence may be by e-mail **knottingmatters@igkt.net** but more extensive items, such as articles for publication, as well as any pictures, which should be of good quality, need to be sent as attachments. All submissions must include their author's name and e-mail or postal address.

If events are to be publicised in Knotting Matters, note the months of publication - March, June, September and December. Although the deadline for the next issue is given at the foot of the Contents page, please note that the editors begin putting it together at least three weeks earlier.

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KNOTTING MATTERS

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PLEASE NOTE: LETTERS & ARTICLES FOR THE SEPTEMBER 2021 *KNOTTING MATTERS* MUST BE RECEIVED BY 13th AUGUST

FRONT COVER: TRADITIONAL BILUM FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA **SEE P 38**

EDITORIAL

Another milestone for the Guild, the first ever Annual General Meeting conducted by Zoom: a brief report follows the President's letter. There were some interesting features, not least the announcement that Ken Yalden was retiring after an extremely long and distinguished career with IGKT. A recognition of his contribution to leadership by Des Pawson appears elsewhere (p 18), and, knowing Ken, it seems highly unlikely he'll simply slide out of sight through the scuppers.

The Membership Secretary's revelation that more countries around the world were represented amongst new members than ever before went some way to offset the report of the small annual net loss in membership overall.

It has been gratifying to see that the Scale Card which accompanied the 150th issue of *KM* has not only been well received, but also well used, to judge by the number of photos received since March, showing some or all of the card; exactly as had been hoped by the Trustees when they suggested it, and the Editorial team when they designed it.

Whereas, just prior to the AGM, the editors were resigned to producing the usual 48-page June edition because of the lack of material, and were even considering the need to include a couple of blank pages, a sudden influx of copy, following a plea at the meeting, meant that we needed to stretch to 52 pages. A great relief, and a big thank you to all the late entrants, as well as to the usual stalwarts.

It has never been clearer how important and valuable is every article and letter, however short or long. If anyone is mulling over whether or not to offer some of their own thoughts, or experience, whether triumph or disaster or what-have-you, we beg you to mull no longer - just do it.

In *KM* 134, we wrote about the longest-serving employee of one of London's oldest yacht chandleries. Then in *KM* 137 and 138 we included a two-part series about the history of the chandlery itself, Arthur Beale, which had begun life in about 1500. We are very sad to report that this unique establishment will close for ever, in the last week of June. Bad news for sailors, climbers, theatres and many others.

By the time you receive this, we will have arranged that all previous Pullouts will be available on the IGKT website, as well as any new ones. This ought to facilitate the printing of copies for distribution by Scout leaders to their scouts, and any other groups who would benefit from project ideas.
David Pepper

Letter from the President

Colin Grundy

Little did we know this time last year, when Covid-19 was spreading around the world, how it was going to affect the Guild's activities. Over 12 months later and we are still unsure how soon we will be able to get back to meeting fellow knot tyers face-to-face. Some countries are faring better than others and despite the roll-out of vaccinations, we are not there yet.

Many organisations have really struggled to keep going in these difficult times, so it's thanks to the hard work put in by our volunteer members that the IGKT has been able to continue without too much disruption. The Trustees and Executive Committee have held virtual meetings by Zoom, the *KM* team have worked hard to keep us in touch with each other and at the same time passing the milestone of 150 issues of *Knotting Matters.* Our Supplies and Membership Secretaries, Andy Hudson, and Caroline Sandrey, have fulfilled the many orders for Guild publications and the numerous needs of new and existing members.

Many members keep in touch via Facebook, and although I am not a user of this medium, my wife Jane brings interesting posts to my attention. The Executive Committee gave permission for branches to use the IGKT Zoom account operated by Jim Wolf and David Pepper, so it's thanks to them that we have been able to hold virtual branch meetings, sometimes involving members from different countries. So I am pleased that, despite the restrictions, the IGKT seems to be weathering the storm. What a difference technology has made from the early days of the Guild when everything was done by post and telephone!

I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few Guild members. Firstly, Ken Yalden. Ken has been (or always seemed to have been), Chairman of either the Committee or Trustees for as long as I can remember. The epitome of efficiency, he has managed the meetings with his range of naval terms to remind us to keep to the subject in hand and not wander. This year, Ken has finally decided to retire. For all your hard work over the years for the IGKT, we thank you. Ken, enjoy your well-earned rest.

Two members who have been working quietly in the background, taking knot tying to an audience of military veterans, have been Phil 'The Rope' Cook and Barry Mault. They have run knot-tying workshops for blind and limbless veterans for a number of years. Well done for your efforts, I am sure it is highly appreciated by all your students.

Finally, I would like to mention this year's recipient of the President's Cup,

Frank Brown of Australia. Frank has been a long-time member of the Guild, during which he has been a regular contributor to *KM*, and assisted me, along with Barry Mault, to digitise the first 100 editions of *KM*. He is also the author of a couple of books on knotted animals (available from our Supplies Secretary). Frank also keeps in regular contact via the telephone with a great number of members from around the world. Here in the northern hemisphere, we know if the phone rings early in the morning we will probably be greeted with, "Gudday, Frank here."

Until we all meet again, stay safe.

Annual General Meeting 2021

In light of the Covid pandemic, the AGM of the guild was held online at a Zoom meeting managed by Jim Wolf who had also organised a system for voting which worked seamlessly. Overall about 60 members from nine countries participated. Twelve apologies had been received.

The AGM began with a minute's silence for those members who had died since the last AGM.

In terms of the AGM business, the assembly accepted the proposed change to Para 9 of the IGKT Constitution increasing the number of Trustees from five to seven. The members then elected all of them. Both votes were carried *nem con*. The members also accepted the motion that the Treasurer put out to tender the position of accountant to carry out the audit for 2022.

Colin Grundy was suddenly taken ill before the meeting, so Sheila Pearson read his opening speech which highlighted the efforts, activities and persons who have kept the Guild active despite the restrictions of Covid. Colin also officially announced that Ken Yalden was stepping down from the Chair after more than 25 years of service to the Guild in several different roles.

Over the past year, the Executive Committee has negotiated to take over the IGKT Facebook account that up till recently had been run by a non-member. Since then, they have also been promoting the Guild on the site. They have also set up a three-person committee to look at specifications for the revamp of the Guild website.

The Executive and the Trustees have each put in place a system to manage the rolling succession of their respective memberships to promote more diverse input to the management of the Guild.

The Membership Secretary announced that the Guild continues to attract new members, some of them from countries hitherto unrepresented, but that there is still a small but steady net loss in overall membership numbers

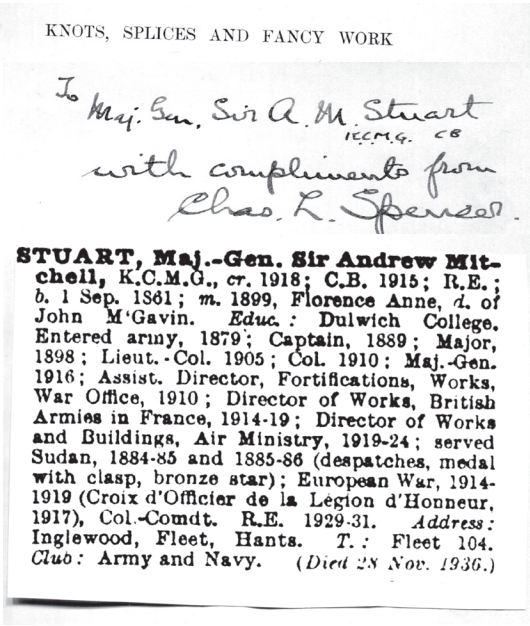
This year has also seen another generous donation of £12,000 by George Hart.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Maurice,

Apropos Richard Hopkins' article in *KM* 150 regarding WW1 military engineering, I enclose a scan of the fly leaf of my 1934 edition of Spencer's *Knots, Splices & Fancy Work*. The dedicatee was the Director of Works, British Armies in France 1914-19. I believe the cutting was from *Who's Who*. I purchased the book in the mid-90s in Bridport. It can't have been very well used by the Major-General, as he died in 1936.

Terry.



KNOTS, SPLICES AND FANCY WORK

To Maj. Gen. Sir A. M. Stuart
K.C.M.G. C.B.
with compliments from
Chas. L. Spencer.

STUART, Maj.-Gen. Sir Andrew Mitchell, K.C.M.G., *cr.* 1918; C.B. 1915; R.E.; *b.* 1 Sep. 1861; *m.* 1899, Florence Anne, *d.* of John M'Gavin. *Educ.:* Dulwich College. Entered army, 1879; Captain, 1889; Major, 1898; Lieut.-Col. 1905; Col. 1910; Maj.-Gen. 1916; Assist. Director, Fortifications, Works, War Office, 1910; Director of Works, British Armies in France, 1914-19; Director of Works and Buildings, Air Ministry, 1919-24; served Sudan, 1884-85 and 1885-86 (despatches, medal with clasp, bronze star); European War, 1914-1919 (Croix d'Officier de la Légion d'Honneur, 1917), Col.-Comdt. R.E. 1929-31. *Address:* Inglewood, Fleet, Hants. *T.:* Fleet 104. *Club:* Army and Navy. *(Died 28 Nov. 1936.)*

Dear Maurice,

I thank you for the publication of my article, Cord Length of a Monkey's Fist Knot in *KM* 150. I was taken aback to read that the feature went to print attributed to **Robert** Nash**.**

I'm sure you can understand my disappointment to discover this, particularly as it was my first publication, ever. I did detect this naming error in one of your emails addressed to me in our earlier correspondence, but I put it down to a slight faux pas. Nevertheless, I'm sure an *erratum* will be put in the next issue.

Are there any issues with publishing my article elsewhere should the opportunity arise?

Thanks again, kind regards,

Richard Nash. M: 07788 614426 rgn9725@yahoo.co.uk

***Editors' Note: We offer our unreserved apologies to Richard for this slip-up. There is no objection to publishing his article elsewhere. It would be good for the Guild if it included a note to say it had previously been published in the IGKT's quarterly,* Knotting Matters.**

Dear Maurice,

Those are my Crutches

Preparing for my husband David's recent admission to hospital for knee revision we realised that his crutches, for which we'd paid last time and which he was planning to take with him, had no identifying features. So we set to work to produce something unique in the shortest possible time. Nothing special in terms of the knotting but those with a maritime background may recognise the significance of the colours: International code flags are Yellow/Blue/Yellow horizontal stripes for Delta, and Red for Bravo. We thought it was appropriate for David Bodger.

As we hoped, these decorations stimulated some conversations with the hospital staff and, you never know, we might get an influx of interest in the Guild from an unexpected source!

Penny Bodger.

Hello Maurice,

I would like to thank the IGKT Trustees for the photo scale card but feel that they have missed out on one important point.

All the other similar cards which I use, and have accumulated from attending various trade shows and demonstrations, include the website address of the provider on the reverse.

This is noticeably lacking on the card but instead it bears information in five languages which was already provided on the card to which it is attached.

Providing the web address would be universally understood and there might even be space for small pictures of knots.

If we can expect more gifts from the Trustees can they please consider this point.

Richard Hopkins.

Editors' Note: Many thanks Richard, however the blame for the design of the card has to belong to the editors of KM. Our rationale was that the card is not intended for general circulation and we assume members know the web address. Non-members viewing the card need only search for the name of the Guild which does appear. Of course, your suggestion is much neater!

Dear Maurice,

Little Things Mean a Lot. (Song Title: Lindeman and Stutz, 1953)

I've long been dressing thumb sticks, for my own interest, nothing to write home about, like a lot of things, it began through necessity, in the shape of something to punt me up steep hillsides as a failing hip continued its decline. Couldn't live with one of those shop bought shiny walking sticks, machine-made, impractical and boring, devoid of character.

So keeping a weather eye open for likely candidates while driving in lanes or in the wilds with dogs, soon found plenty about, easy enough to spot, old untended mature hedges, willow stands near rivers, streams or wet places, just nip out with decent secateurs, job done. Mind you, even in the middle of nowhere it is surprising how often you just get out and suddenly the world turns up wanting to get past, another knock-on effect of Covid, the road system is getting crowded with internet-purchase delivery vans, all impatient, and a lot lost. I digress.

First thing, cut off just about a hand's width above fork, and all the branches below and stash in Britain's finest 4x4. Been doing this for ages, then along comes *KM* 150, attention drawn very quickly to Mr Hughes' excellent article.

Firstly, thought it was only me that did this and then, shock horror, I learned something new, never even entered my head, (although plenty of room in there). Leave a short projection near the end! This little change means such a lot, up to now, a device limited to pushing can now pull, amazing, dramatically more useful, as Mr H says, you can now access that big fat bramble often just out of reach. Now you can deal with recalcitrant barbed wire, help struggling dogs up steep banks out of swollen rivers, and above and beyond all that, wile away the long winter nights, or sit in the sun, practising the huge variety of covering knots, which opens the door to the search for hard-laid natural cords (Mr H got that right).

I quite like Chatham Master Ropemakers' tarred marlin, but takes a while to loose tackiness and become dry, smooth and shiny, (lots of use does that), then looks great and the lovely evocative tarry, aroma remains. Having said that, am waiting for first order from Mikko Snellman, supplier of good variety of hard-laid natural cords and remarkably high quality ropework tools.

Do what you will, strip bark and soak with boiled linseed oil, which gives lovely golden finish or leave on and just do the fork where your hand or thumb goes, whatever, by the way, be aware, a cloth soaked in linseed oil can spontaneously combust, ("Not a lot of people know that" as Mr Caine would say). In conclusion, thumb sticks: something for everyone. If stuck for hitching ideas, see *Riggers Apprentice* by Brion Toss.

N King.

Dear Maurice,

I have read with interest the various suggested methods for calculating the length of cord or rope for various knots (*KM* 124 p 36, *KM* 139 pp 3, 23, *KM* 140 p 7, *KM* 150 p 40) and I would like to add to the mix.

You kindly used an image of a mat of mine on the front cover of *KM* 130. This three-pass knot is 1m in diameter and made from 12mm Hempex. I estimated the length needed by first calculating its area (area of a circle = πr^2 where r is the radius) so the area of this mat was: $\pi \times [0.5]^2 = \pi \times 0.25 = 3.14 \times 0.25 \simeq 0.785 m^2$).

You can see from the image that the mat has only small voids and has a two-layer thickness because of all the over-under crossings. This means that the total effective area needed to be covered is twice that previously calculated, ie $2 \times 0.785 = 1.57 m^2$. We can then find the length of 12mm rope needed to cover this $1.57 m^2$ from length = area ÷ width = $1.57 m^2 / 0.012 m = 131 m$. Allowing, say, 10% extra for ease of handling etc, the total length needed is 131 + 13 = 144m. In fact, I used 150m (50m per pass) to be on the safe side, but, as things turned out, I'd been too cautious and had some off-cuts.

Standard Turks Heads are also 2-layered, to a first approximation, and so a similar (area ÷ width) estimation gives a good value for the required length.

When making the circular mats in *KM* 149, p 41, I used a different method because the mats have some voids. I first estimated the length of a path through the design which started and returned to the centre, by lying the cord roughly along the printed design. Since the mats are rotationally symmetrical, this length was then multiplied by the degree of symmetry of the knot. In the image shown, this was 8, as can be seen from the octagonal centre-void. The mat shown is about 0.25m in diameter and a path as described is about 0.6m long, leading to an 8 x 0.6m = 4.8m needed for a single pass. I used about 5.2m to be safe.

Colin Byfleet.

Dear Maurice,

Last year at Marlinspike Skills in Indianapolis IN, just before the pandemic, a room full of alumni were messing around with tying Baby Yodas based on the Disney hit *Mandelorian*! Well, after trying some and looking at others, I decided on this combo and have made many for friends and colleagues and continue to get requests for them!

Really missed attending this year's AGM, it would have been my 12th year attending but hoping to attend in March 2022!

Larry McCammon.

Hello Maurice,

Ref letter in *KM* 150 by W Kerr: When cutting Dyneema, relegate the axe and knife to your tool box, and use D-splicer D-16 scissors. These are specially designed for cutting Dyneema up to 10 mm diameter. A pair of these scissors costs under £40. A D-splicer D-20 version will cost £60+ for cutting 12mm Dyneema. The latest version the D-splicer 26 is for cutting 14mm (cost unknown).

I have been using my D-splicer scissors, for over four years, to cut everything from ropes to very fine fishing line without any trouble. Give them a go.

Please note, hairdressers will pay over £100 for their scissors!

Owen K Nuttall.

Dear Maurice,

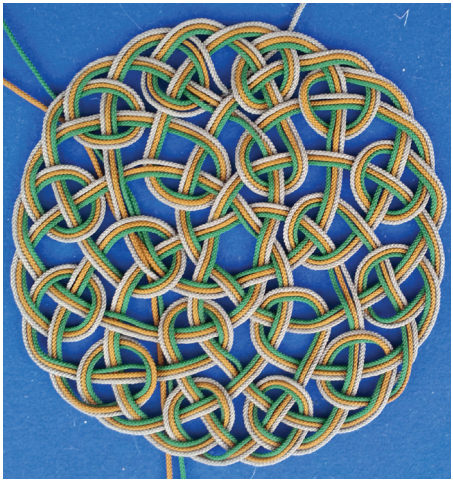
Ref the Farrimond hitch, a knot credited to Barry Farrimond, actor in the radio soap opera *The Archers.* This took me back to my school days (1950s) when the highlight of the evening was listening to the radio from 6.45 to 7.00pm: *Dick Barton, Special Agent*, with his two friends Jock and Snowy. This came to an abrupt end on the 1st of January 1951, to be replaced by *The Archers*. At least it suited my mother.

Barry Farrimond is credited with the discovery or invention in 2008 of the Farrimond Friction hitch. This knot is very similar to the Linfit quick-release hitch, *KM* 62, and *KM* 135 (in answer to a problem posed by Anne Dyer in *KM* 134). The Linfit hitch has many variations with its locking loop. While the Farrimond finished knot is very similar to the Linfit hitch, it has to be said that many knots bear a close resemblance to others.

Owen K Nuttall.

Dear Maurice,

The attached photo shows a knotted mat in need of finishing; ends to be secured, a little re-shaping perhaps and mounting (on felt say). It was started decades ago using Guild Knot Chart 20 (Celtic Knot mat design contributed by Geoffrey Budworth), but the doubling and tripling runs were completed only recently. If any IGKT member has the interest, time and patience to perfect it and would like to take permanent possession please get in touch at vernon.hughes@talktalk.net and I will gladly dispatch it by post.



Vernon Hughes.

Dear Maurice,

Mick Korker used to be an IGKT member but dropped out a couple of years ago. He has pretty much established a nice little business for himself doing rope work of all shapes and sizes.

He just completed this suspension bridge for a client down in Byron Bay (where else?) on a private property. His client said she just wanted to be able to walk out over the pond! It's going to be interesting when finished because he tells me the client now wants shorter rope bridges around the property over various creeks and gullies! I'll see if I can get some more details on lengths and sizes etc.

Jim Caswell.

Hi Maurice,

Thank you for my copy of Knotting Matters, which arrived today.

I thought I would share my Cavendoli knotting. I wrote a special study on knots while at college many years ago (1973-76). Perhaps one day I might publish?

I also used to make lots of macramé items to sell, but teaching and buses came along. I did a Cavendoli knotting name plate for my son and had always intended doing one for my daughter. During Lockdown I finally did it. I was pleased and it certainly was a lot of fun, while zooming.

Sue Wickstead.
https://suewickstead.co.uk/blog/lockdown-family

Dear Editors,

Having read to p 25 of *KM* 150, I find to my consternation that the measurements of the little jade plaques were incorrectly given.

The text should have read 1.2cm x 1.2cm x 0.2cm, or 12mm x 12mm x 2mm.

I should have known better, or have picked that up at the proof-reading stage.

Grovel, grovel!

Europa C-D.

The String Telephone

by Richard Hopkins

A fun use of cord.

Many members will remember making a string telephone way back, using empty baked bean tins. Younger members may have used paper cups which often give a better result. It may be thought that this telephone is a relatively modern idea, dating to the development of commercial canning. Wrong.

300 miles north of Lima, in northern Peru, is Chan Chan, the largest pre-Columbian city in the Americas. A version of the phone was found there in the 1930s which is now in the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian.

Chan Chan is the largest mud or adobe city in the world and covered 20 square kilometres with many citadels and courtyards.

It was built from around 900 AD as the capital of the Chimor kingdom and was eventually conquered by the Incas in about 1470, 22 years before Columbus crossed the Atlantic.

In 1535, Pizarro founded the city of Trujillo nearby and the old capital was looted. Today it is an archaeological site in need of restoration and renovation.

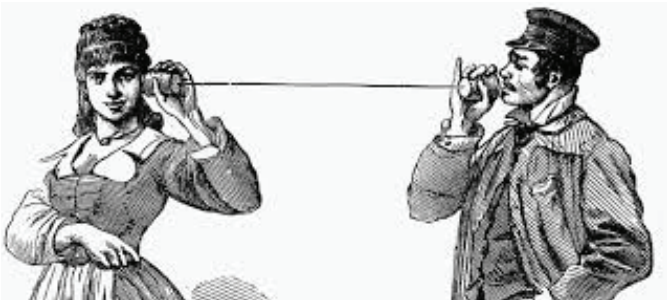
Instead of tin cans there are the shells of gourds with a membrane of animal skin fixed across the base. The gourds, about 3.5 inches long, are coated with resin and a joined by a cotton string 75 feet long.

It is thought that the device may have been used for communication with servants to avoid personal contact or perhaps by the priests to astound the peasants with a voice coming from a gourd.

The telephone works because the membrane at the base of the gourd transmits vibrations from speech to the membrane at the other end which then vibrates and allows the listener to hear the message.

In Europe, this idea has been known for a long time and Robert Hooke in 1664 was experimenting with vibrations and is reported to have made a telephone in 1667.

The idea spread and the gadget was often called the 'lovers' telephone' as it allowed intimate conversations to be carried out discretely.



To make a telephone you will need two tin cans or paper cups. Pierce a small hole in the centre of the base of each cup. Thread a thin cord through the hole and knot it on the inside of the cup. Do this to both cups. Stretch the cord and hold it taut. If you speak into one cup someone at the other end can hear your voice by holding their cup to an ear.

It may help to improve the transmission by tying the cord to a small paperclip inside the cup. This is not essential.but it allows plenty of tension to be applied to the string to make the end vibrate more strongly and to stop the string from pulling out of the hole.

You will have realised that the phone requires a straight cord in order to function but by making a loop in the cord and twisting it around an anchor point it is possible to turn corners.

Thanks must go to Yann Colas of IGKT France who brought this history to our attention via a link on the IGKT.France emails.

https://www.ancient-origins.net/artifacts-ancient-technology/1200-year-old-telephone-amazing-invention-ancient-chimu-civilization-020490

(https://tinyurl.com/58vstdu4)

Given that the principle was known before contact with Europe it emphasizes that ideas involving cordage develop independently around the world and that trying to patent, for instance, a knot, is folly, as someone, somewhere, has almost certainly tied or used it on some previous occasion.

An Excerpt from the Bushby Story

by Pieter van de Griend

In more than one sense, knots are a truly entangled subject. Occasionally a knotter with more than a superficial interest in the subject emerges to race off into retrieving anything and everything on the subject. After these individuals publish their knot thoughts, they are showered with praise. Well-known examples in the Anglo-Saxon world are Clifford Warren Ashley and Cyrus Lawrence Day, who bequeathed their legacy for posterity to judge. In the Scandinavian countries, to a lesser extent, Hjalmar August Öhrvall left his mark. A shared characteristic among these individuals was their understanding that the study of knots requires knowing about the existence of, and having access to, sources of knotting knowledge.

I would like to draw attention to the combination of enthusiastic knot collecting on the one hand, but its publication sadly being deferred by well over a century, on the other. That fate befell Henry North Grant Bushby (HNGB). He managed to establish a rigorous framework in which to study the field while jotting down his ideas on hundreds of pages. This is an excerpt of the story about how an obscure, yet one of the most intriguing, sources on knots in existence, was almost lost. I will share my recollections, as I experienced them some 35 years ago, triggering the rise of that phoenix. Like any other research domain, studying knots requires keeping a record of the individual structures and references to the sources where they were encountered. Sometimes the book-keeping aspect takes on a life of its own and you evolve into more of a librarian seeking to manage knot knowledge than an actual knotter. But in my experience, the two happily combine.

Credit for having developed a sharp, keen sense for knotting sources goes to the late Sten Johansson, the Bandhagen knotter from Sweden. He collected books on ships and had taken up the tying of knots he found in his large nautical source collection. During his excursions to find new sources land, he must have first stumbled on mention of HNGB's manuscript towards the end of the 1970s. Sten's first mention of the find was to Geoffrey Budworth in 1983 *KM* 3, p 14.

It must have been around 1985 when Sten and I realized we were getting caught up in a Bushby hunt. During several of our phone calls, he spoke about how one of his librarian friends, at a university in Nebraska, discovered a reference to the HNGB manuscripts.

In fact, the Nebraska card file describing the Bushby source was an enigma.

The cryptic and suggestive text annoyed us. Whatever could be in that source? In those days you had to actually visit a library to obtain access to their manuscript collection. Sten had been in touch with the Mariners' Museum in Newport News VA (USA) to get photocopies, but communication was not very smooth. For a number of reasons, the Mariners' Museum was unwilling to share a copy of the full manuscript with an individual researcher, but they would consider sharing it with another library, like the Nebraskan University. As there would be a stiff fee to getting a stack of Xeroxes, Sten had tried to gather people in an attempt to buy a copy of the manuscript from the Mariners' Museum over the years. There was a handful of keen participants, but the attempt flagged.

Little did I know that a decade later, there would be an opportunity to visit Newport News. Prior to my travels, a few phone calls assured me that the Mariners' Museum knew I was coming. In fact, after checking opening times and explaining the nature of my visit, they even booked a hotel for me close by. So, after the 1997 *Ashley Retrospective* in New Bedford, I headed off to Chesapeake to sail with friends before setting course for Newport News.

During a few August days in 1997, I visited the Museum and made the most of my two days in Newport News. The librarians, Benjamin Trask and Lynn Garner were exceptionally kind. Lynn showed me around the museum, free of charge. That is a double win for a Dutchman of Scottish descent! During conversations with Benjamin, he came to realize what a treasure they had. He suggested I apply for a Wilkinson Grant to get more time to study HNGB and perhaps get it published.

Benjamin did not allow me to copy the entire manuscript, but the Museum did let me have some 50 photocopied pages per book, which added considerable weight to my luggage. Time is a scarce commodity in my life and priorities overtake each other, so the notes were stacked on a bookshelf. In 1997, I wrote a short Dutch article about my Bushby adventures for *Het Knoopknauwertje* [*KK*] 9, pp 22-27 and translated that article for Joe Schmidbauer's *Knot News* in 2001 30, pp 1-6. I also managed to sprinkle miscellaneous HNGB yarns in *KK* 12, p 5, *KK* 13, p 14, *KK* 15, pp 7-9.

Many years later, it was with great pleasure I learned from Jan Vos that IGKT had been working on a transcription of the Bushby Manuscript. The moment I held a massive, beautifully bound, blue hard-back copy of that effort, I was certain that Sten Johansson would have been proud. His relentless pursuit preventing HNGB from slipping into the mists of time had ended better than he could have imagined. His spotting of the HNGB manuscript and the subsequent IGKT initiative would enable knotters all over the world to study Bushby. Perhaps *Knotting Matters* could be a platform for sharing their results?

Right- or Left-handed?

by Phil 'The Rope' Cook

Teaching knots

In *KM* 150, I wrote about my experiences holding decorative knot-tying workshops on Zoom, and mentioned some of the challenges of teaching remotely.

One other thing came to light after I'd written the article. One of the participants is left-handed. I am right-handed, so some videos and diagrams can be an issue for a left-handed person. For many projects, such as making a Cobra Bar bracelet, handedness doesn't really matter, but there are some projects for which instructions are hard to follow for a left-handed person. Let me give an example.

We held a workshop tying Turks Heads around a cylinder, which wasn't too much of an issue for left-handers. However, whilst writing this, I am planning a workshop that includes tying a Turks Head around one's fingers, and that most definitely could be an issue, as I will be demonstrating tying the knot around my left hand.

With so much design software available, it's quite easy for someone to mirror a diagram or photograph, but how to mirror a video? If I use one of my own videos, I can produce a left-handed version by flipping the original video. (Thanks to Jeff Wyatt for teaching me this!)

But what about using a video from the many thousands on YouTube? Many of these are much better than those I produce, so I often reference them; but how to flip them?

Also, there is the concern as to whether I would even be allowed to flip them. Flipping a video live on screen to show the workshop participants without copying it first is surely OK, and there's no infringement of copyright. I always produce a workshop document with links in, so folks can go over things afterwards, and that means that some need the flipped version available for later. If I want to give a permanent link to a flipped video, however, I'd have to copy it and publish the flipped version. Would that be an infringement of copyright, even if I did give credit to the original video producer?

THERE IS A SOLUTION! Anyone using the Google Chrome browser can install a 'Mirror Video' app that will flip anything on screen. That means I can give a link to a YouTube video, and viewers can flip it themselves if they need to.

I am sure the IGKT has its fair share of left-handed people (although, occasionally, right-handed folks must come across the same problem), and some of them watch YouTube tutorials to learn new knots. For those people, you may find this useful:

If you don't use Chrome, it's easy to install from the following link.

https://www.google.co.uk/chrome/

In order to flip videos, go to this site and install the following (or do a search for the Google Apps store for 'Mirror Video') -

https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/mirror-videos/dahonjfeboelljpiodbnngpmjkgjkbie/related (https://tinyurl.com/t8sdd3pc)

although there are other apps to choose from.

One final point to take account of: any textual instructions will be flipped too, and references to 'left-hand side' and 'right-hand side' will need to be borne in mind!

NEWSLETTER PULL-OUTS

At the AGM, much appreciation and support was expressed for the continued inclusion in *Knotting Matters* of 'Pull-outs' for the encouragement of younger and newer knotters. Several members offered to suggest and provide projects or at least topics for the editors to take forward.

Please don't welch on your promises. We need your ideas.

Vote of Thanks to Ken Yalden

At the AGM, Des Pawson was called upon to thank Ken for his service to the Guild, and he talked of his feeling that Ken has always been there, even though he was not at the founding meeting; probably he was at sea at that time.

Another enduring memory is that Ken has always been a hands-on person at the meetings, helping members to set up their tables and tablecloths , so they all looked nice and smart - and variations on the theme of smart. Ken has always been a member of the committee from early days, later he was chairman of the committee and Des remembered sitting in Ken's home holding a small baby who is now an adult, which shows how long ago that was.

Then, of course, he was President and then Chair of Trustees since the reorganisation of the Guild in order to satisfy the Charity Commission.

Ken was also active in the setting up of the Solent branch as well as bringing in Royal Navy members, and being active on board HMS Victory for a number of years.

He also turned up at the opening of the Museum of Knots and Sailors' Ropework with a bottle of champagne, and was instrumental in the making of a film about the traditional method of fabricating a prick of tobacco – still available on YouTube.

Ken's presence was also marked by his travels to knotters' meetings around the world: USA, Netherlands, France, Sweden, Belgium, Germany as well of course in the UK. He is also very active on Facebook, as well as promoting World Knot Tying Day.

"Ken you are a fine knot-tyer, an enthusiastic knot-tyer. Thank you, Ken!"

Ken's brother was then asked to present Ken with a personalised seam rubber specially commissioned from Mikko Snellman, offered as a gift from the Guild in celebration of his service.

Accidental Beckets

by Mac Mackenzie

I've always found the thought of working from the *Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Rope Work* by Graumont and Hensel a little daunting. With this in mind, I thought I would try to apply myself. I decided on trying the 6-strand Double Matthew Walker knot from plate 67 in the 'Miscellaneous Shroud Knots' section. This is labelled as '227' on p 141 of my Fourth Edition of this wonderful book. I really just wanted to tie the knot. I had no idea of how I would apply it to anything.

My first problem was that I didn't have any 6-strand rope. I did, however, have a bit of spare 10mm manila from recent mat projects. I cut out two 1.2m pieces of this 3-strand rope and laid them up together to form what I thought would be 6-strand rope. I was quite pleased with the results but was a little confused that one strand seemed to take up less than the other five whilst laying up. I then realised that one of the strands was actually forming a core for the other five. Maybe I invented 5-strand cored rope (I doubt it, but I can dream). The end result met my needs.

Initially, I'd thought I'd make another length and just join the two but then had a quick flash of inspiration to perhaps join the opened ends of the one piece to form a circle. Not much more to explain here as the marrying of 12 strands and the completion of the two Matthew Walker knots came surprisingly quickly.

As soon as I'd completed the first, 'BECKET!' just shouted out at me. I'd accidentally made a chest becket (of sorts). I ended up making a couple of pairs/sets. I also had two pairs of excellent cleats that Mikko Snellman had made for me a year or two ago standing by.

My accidental Double Mathew Walker Shroud knot beckets

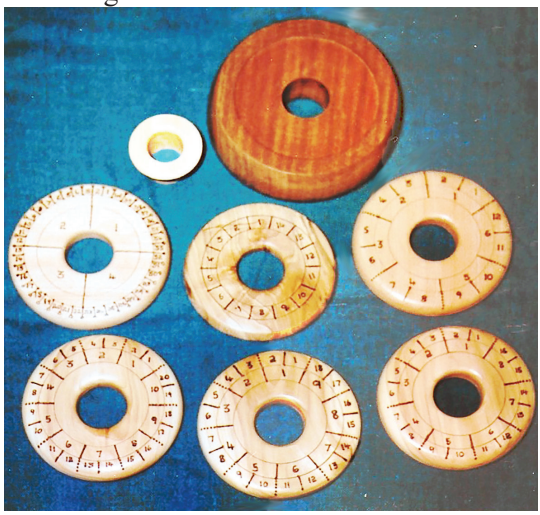
Knots on Wood

by Vernon Hughes

It has occurred to me, in my 87th year, that there may be just a little value for the Guild at large in setting down in *KM* (if space permits) my experience of a rather unforeseen association between knotting in general and woodcraft (especially woodturning) as experienced over a good many years.

For those who have access to it, an appropriate starting point would be to look up a substantial article of mine on solid sinnet-tying and associated turned wooden equipment contributed to *KM* 65 pp 31-37 and see a full set of wooden components.

Events leading to production of that article began with the 1986 Knotting Extravaganza for which, having stuck out an innocent neck with a modest offer to contribute a few solid sinnets (only because I liked their appearance), I was allocated (with an extravagant wave of old Frank Harris' arm and a twinkle in his eye), the task of tying the whole of Chapter 39 of *The Ashley Book of Knots*. The fact that I was a new boy in the knotting world and had never knowingly seen any sort of sinnet, solid or otherwise, was cheerfully swept aside. There were many knots to be allocated and not that many volunteers. In the event, the challenge was met, with the single exception of the 61-strand pentalpha (*ABOK* #3082) only omitted because Colin Jones had already completed and offered it. He worked all those strands perfectly in white, whereas I used a wide range of colours for effect, and to aid understanding of each sinnet's construction.

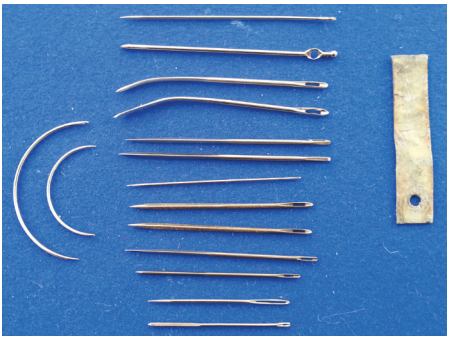


My first (Mark 1) table was an inverted flexible plastic flower pot with a set of marked-out paper circles pinned to the top. The legs were simple DIY-store lengths of cheap timber and the weights were assorted coach bolts and 6 in nails. The need for a higher quality design was realised at the time but took years to evolve, woodturning being taken up in 1994.

Over the years since then, the two craft hobbies have come together

from time to time in a variety of different ways, both decorative and practical, and that process will be described in a series of short reports. There are two main themes, one being the turning of items to be decorated with knotwork and the other to produce tools (some of which can be knot-decorated) and equipment used in the knotting craft. A few projects having no association with wood may also merit a few words.

An early turned item was the needle case, the second made to those dimensions, 5 in (125mm) in length with an internal diameter of 1⅛ in (28mm). The original had been made for Europa Chang-Dawson and was handed to her at a UK West Country Branch meeting way back. It was spotted by one-time Guild member, the late Dave Pusill, who asked if I could make one for him. That was fine and the case was handed over two months later, but I was astonished to have it handed back to me at the next meeting beautifully dressed in hand-dyed brown knotwork as shown. It has been a valued possession from that time and has sat on the top of my ditty-bag contents (bag made later) for years. That size of case is justified by the dimensions, weight and shape of the needles it holds.



Europa told me recently that Dave had sought her counsel on the means of applying the knots. Thanks Dave for the care and thought applied!

Making needle cases is pleasing work in itself and they can be fashioned to any size required. They can be made for decoration (not just with knotting) or to display the beauty of selected woods. They have also proved popular as raffle prizes at our annual fund-raising branch raffles, although they need to be trickled out slowly to avoid ‘market saturation’.

An element of challenge for the turner comes in making sure that lids will always remain push-tight. Steady hands are essential as is control of the timber’s moisture content from the start. Threaded closures would be a desirable feature but it can take a year to develop the feel and touch required, and miniature hand-held chasing tools are not readily available.

Bendy Bights II

by Europa Chang Dawson

Lattices appear everywhere in Chinese culture. In the traditional buildings, lattices were set in every window to prevent the larger birds and bats from flying into the house, to moderate the brilliance of the summer sunshine and to provide a certain degree of privacy. This last was particularly necessary as the extended family all shared the one set of facilities in a large family compound, with each nuclear unit having their own suite of rooms. More important still, the women of a household needed to be screened from outsiders.

Even in my childhood the handymen (who always came in pairs, as a matter of good manners) would keep up an audible conversation between themselves, a running commentary about what they were doing and what they could see. That way, they were warning all the women of the household that if they were immodest enough to appear they could only blame themselves. On the other hand, every woman knew that so long as she remained only a shadow behind the lattice it would be assumed that she was beautiful and desirable.

Indoors too, lattices appeared on chair-backs, the covers of the ceramic charcoal-heaters in winter, and on boxes and bowls holding incense, potpourri or sticks of solid ink. The scent of the first two kept the air sweet in rooms, while the last was used in cupboards as the pungency of ink-sticks discouraged moths.

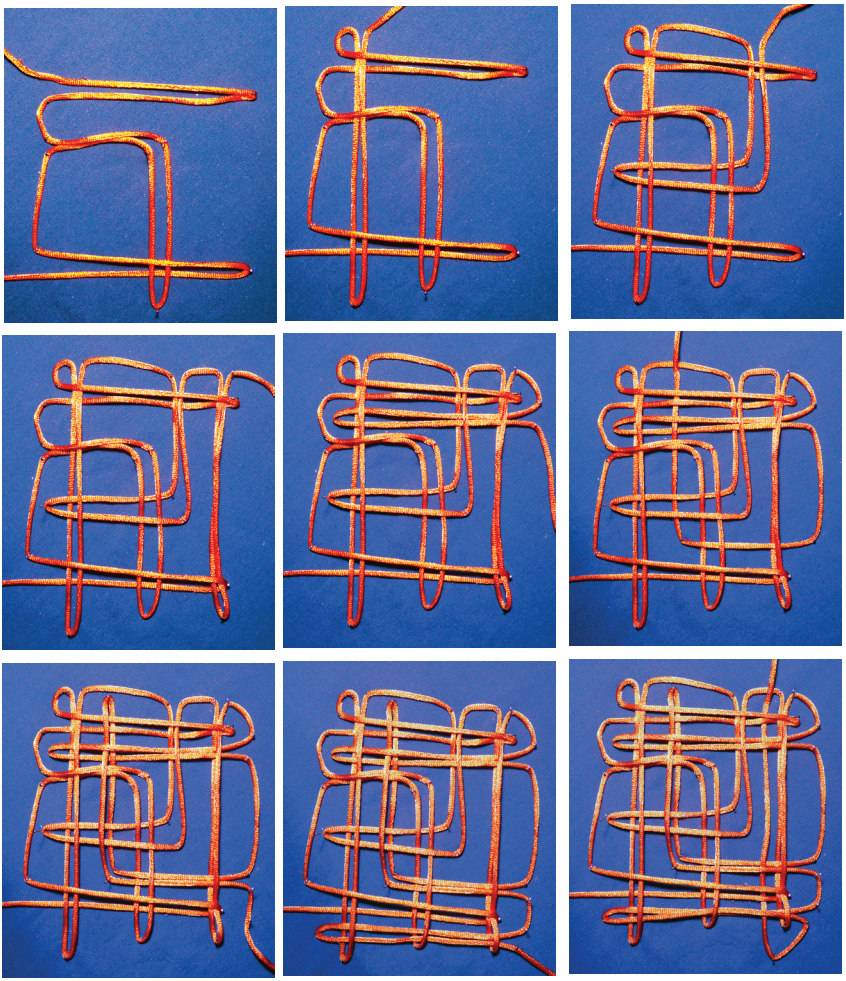
Latticed blocks also appeared in gardens, where these blocks were built together to form low walls separating areas within the garden.

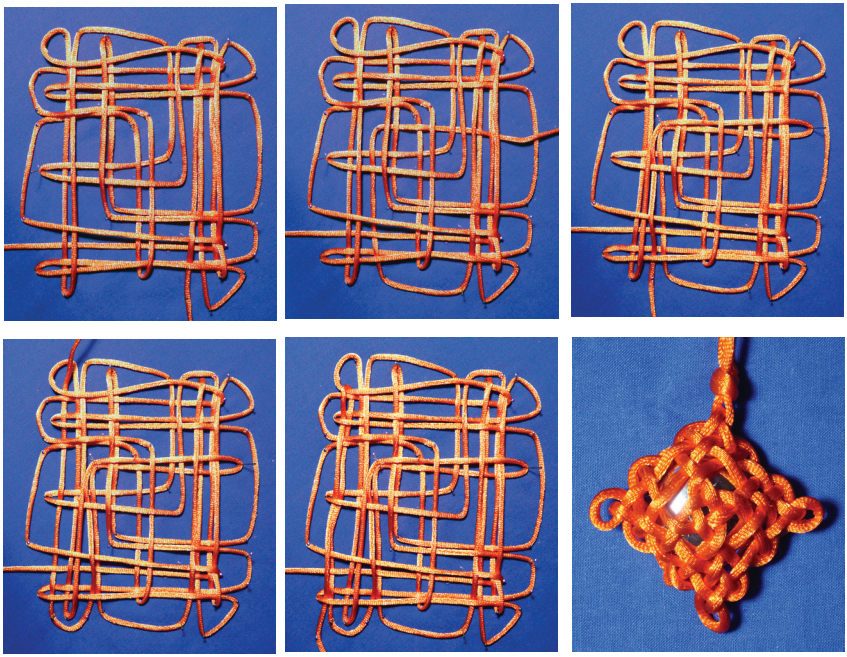
In prints of such gardens, very often the girl walking among the plants would be wearing robes with a waistband carrying several pendants hanging at knee-level, to help control fluttering silks. These pendants were held in latticed pockets so as to protect them from abrasion, or if already damaged, they could still be used as the flaws

were concealed by the lattice. The pockets were knotted from silken cord. Probably the most popular lattice was a swastika form.

Even in the early 20th century the abbreviated form of the word for 'ten-thousand' was a swastika and I can remember seeing (in shops) the swastika marked over the ten-thousand rod of the abacus on the counter. Thus the symbol has become associated with wealth, or a wish for the comfort of wealth. (This may have travelled from India, for in Hinduism the swastika is the symbol of Ganesh, the God of fortune.)

The demonstration shows how to tie a lattice with a swirl in the middle. The windmill is often described as a swastika and carries the associations of luck and wealth. This makes use of bendy bights turning through one right-angle only.





Knot, 'Shiftweave Type 1a', contains an inclusion

[If you are tying it to hold anything, remember to insert the object before tightening up!]

For comparison, the knot with an insertion has been shown at the end (but this is tied with a single edge-strand instead of a doubled one). This knot is the one Lydia Chen describes as Shiftweave Type 1a.

Type 2 is where reflex bendy bights have been used, and those with suffix b have the central lattice made as crowning over 2.

I have not included any images of the lattices formed from reflex bendy bights at this point as there are several variations depending on how the bendy bights are interwoven.

Teign Maritime Shanty Festival
Teignmouth, Devon UK
4 & 5 September 2021
All things marine with rope making, IGKT knot tyers,
Tall ship, shanty singers and much more
https://www.teignshantyfestival.co.uk/this-years-festival

Covering Different Shapes*

by Claude Hochet

As you already doubtless know, it is possible to cover all sorts of different shapes using cylindrical knots: spheres, cubes, parallelepipeds, a speciality of my friend Michel Since, and pyramids, a speciality of another friend, Jan Vos, two extraordinary knotters who left us far too early.

Cylindrical knots are a special category in the knotter's world which can sometimes be intimidating but also fascinating and open limitless horizons. This field of knotting is infinite and covers different sub-sets: regular knots, irregular knots as well as asymmetrical regular knots (one example being Thump mats) to which the different weave patterns can be added; overall an enormous and captivating subject.

Here, I hope to share with you some of my knowledge about coverings, beginning with a 'fender' keyring. The challenge was to find the design that would lead to a perfect covering.

The fender is 77mm x 27mm and I chose a 2mm cord and a 2-ply covering. Looking at the fender, it is clear that it could be described as a sphere cut in half, with a cylinder between the two halves. As we know, the number of bights determines the diameter of the knot and the number of leads, its length.

The objective was to start from a design that would cover a sphere of 27mm with 2-ply of a 2mm cord. That gave a 3-bight nest, 4B x 15L knot with 144 crossings.

For the cylindrical part, all it needed was to extend the leads. Starting from the dimensions of the fender and the diameter of the cord it was relatively easy to extend the length of the design in order to accommodate 77mm instead of the 27mm of the sphere.

In other words, 77mm - 27mm = 50mm which, using two strands of 2mm cord, gave 50/2/2 or 12.5 which I rounded up to 13 leads that needed to be added for the cylinder, and so 28 leads in all (15 for the sphere and 13 for the cylinder).

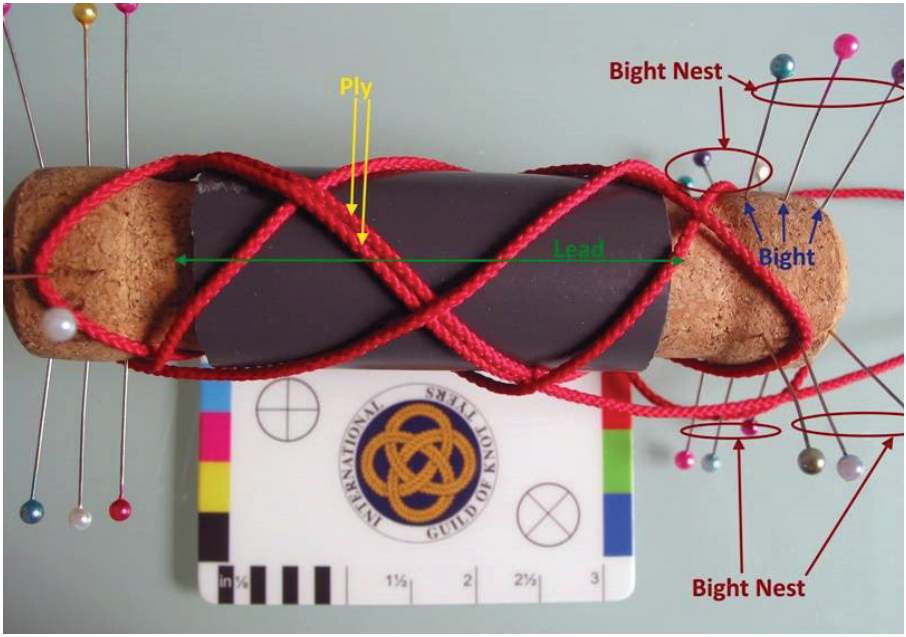
However, with 28 leads I would have ended up with an 8-strand knot. Preferring a single-strand one, I raised the number of leads to 29, giving 312 crossings with a strict Over/Under pattern.

The calculations might seem a bit empirical, but in tying the knot, they turned out to be perfect.

The knot was tied on a 30mm x 120mm cylinder. I didn't try to optimise it, with a shorter cylinder which could have saved me some effort in the tightening! In a future article, I will tell you about my quest for the perfect cylinder. The table of crossings and grid are shown right.

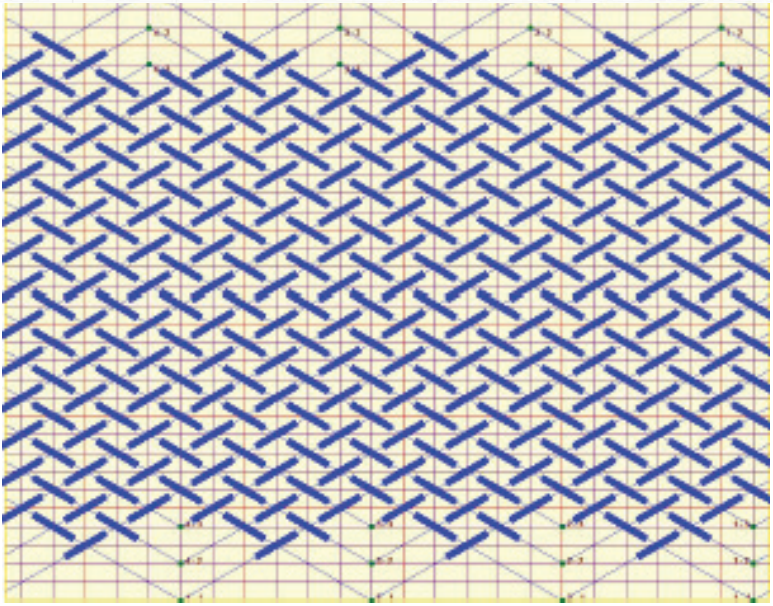
From there, the work was standard for any covering: tie on a cylinder, transfer to the object to be covered, take up the slack, equalise the layout and then double.

Experience taught me to take up the slack twice, being careful to systematically move the slack towards the centre of the cylinder, which helps to balance the knot across the whole. The doubling of the knot ensures the final tightening.



Editors' Note: Claude provided this annotated image of a knot being laid up on a cylinder. His use of 'bight-nest' for what Tom Hall calls 'pass' in Introduction To Turk's-Head Knots, *is eminently understandable, however the use of 'ply' for the process of doubling could cause confusion as 'ply' can mean strands of a cord. Is there any standard vocabulary generally accepted by knotters?*

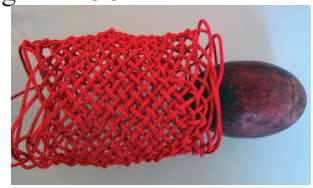
From Pin	To Pin	Strand	Crossings : -> 174 Over - 138 Under	TABLE OF CROSSINGS FOR FENDER
1 - 1	2 - 2	1	Free Run	
2 - 2	3 - 2	1	2o	
3 - 2	4 - 1	1	2o	
4 - 1	1 - 3	1	u - o - u - o	
1 - 3	1 - 3	1	u - o - u - o	
1 - 3	2 - 1	1	o - u - 2o - u - 2o	
2 - 1	3 - 2	1	o - u - 2o - u - 2o	
3 - 2	4 - 2	1	o - 2u - 2o - 2u - 2o	
4 - 2	1 - 1	1	o - 2u - 2o - 2u - 2o	
1 - 1	2 - 3	1	o - 2u - 3o - 2u - 3o	
2 - 3	2 - 3	1	o - 2u - 3o - 2u - 2o	
2 - 3	3 - 1	1	2o - 3u - 3o - 3u - 2o	
3 - 1	4 - 2	1	2o - 2u - o - u - 2o - 2u - o - u - o	
4 - 2	1 - 2	1	3o - 3u - 4o - 3u - 2o	
1 - 2	2 - 1	1	2o - u - o - u - o - u - 2o - u - o - u - o - u - 2o	
2 - 1	3 - 3	1	2o - 3u - o - u - 3o - 3u - o - u - 2o	
3 - 3	3 - 3	1	o - u - o - 2u - o - u - 2o - u - o - 2u - o - u - o	
3 - 3	4 - 1	1	u - 3o - u - o - 2u - o - u - 3o - u - o - 2u - o - u - o	
4 - 1	1 - 2	1	o - u - 2o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - 2o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u	
1 - 2	2 - 2	1	o - u - 2o - u - o - 2u - o - u - o - u - 2o - u - o - 2u - o - u - o - u	
2 - 2	3 - 1	1	o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o	
3 - 1	4 - 3	1	u - 2o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - 2o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o	
4 - 3	4 - 3	1	o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - 2o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o	
4 - 3	1 - 1	1	u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o - u - o	



The second example that I wish to demonstrate, was to cover a float from a small fishing net, a sort of ‘bulging’ cylinder, about 61mm long with an average diameter of 32mm. Here again, the most difficult element was in defining the knot grid: it took me two tries to get it right.

To start with, I opted for a 4-bight nest, 4B x 24L knot giving 320 crossings (gives a 2-ply knot), which, on completion proved not to cover the form properly, so I increased the number of crossings from 320 to 336 or a 4-bight nest, 4B x 25L knot. Once the float was introduced and slack taken up, it was imperative that the slack was moved towards the middle, to avoid the risk of the covering being too dense at the ends. As with the fender, doubling the knot ensured proper tension.

My last example was to cover an old wooden key fob, more oval in shape than the float: 80mm long and 48.5mm maximum diameter.



Experience can help but here again I had to have a second go at it in order to achieve a good covering. This time, my first effort was too tight (it was a 5-bight nest, 4B x 27L knot with 440 crossings, based on a sphere of 47.3mm). I reduced the number of crossings to 400 and the number of leads to 25. As with the previous examples, once the object was placed in the knot, the slack was taken up twice, always shifting the slack to the middle of the knot. Doubling ensured the final tension of the knot.

In this short article I have tried to show that with a bit of imagination and lots of practice anything is possible. I have not included the tables of crossings from the latter two pieces but am happy to share them should you wish.

As many before me, I took my first steps with small spherical coverings. During this process, now more than 10 years ago, I studied the works of A.G. Schaake and profited from my friend Ch. Hamel's patience. In order to carry out this sort of work, the use of a drawing app can be very helpful.

In a future *KM,* I propose to present a method for tying a simple cylindrical knot with different codings.

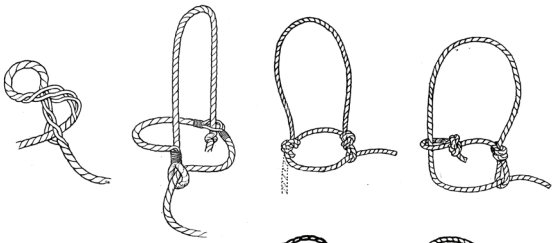
** Translated by Maurice McPartlan*

Use of Rope in Veterinary Practice

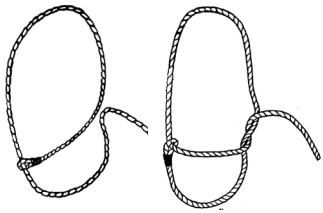
by David Pepper

My veterinary training in the early 1960s included centuries-old techniques with rope or cord in the handling and restraint of animals. While most continued to rely on time-honoured principles, a few in more common use had been improved by 19th century practitioners, and there were also many variations developed by individuals for their own use. Only a few of them appear here.[1]

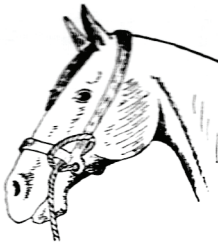
The rope (½ in or ¾ in diameter) used in these examples of manipulating horses and cattle was usually of high-quality cotton, being less likely than hemp or sisal to cause abrasive damage to the animal. Not long into my career, medical alternatives began to replace physical restraint procedures. So, sixty years later, many of these procedures have no place in modern veterinary training.



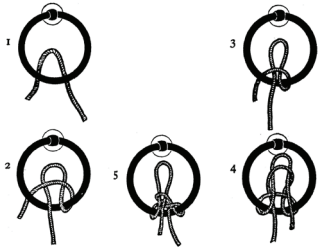
A halter, however, is still a basic need by which to lead horses and cattle. My scouting experience of knots, splicing and whipping rope meant that learning to make, or improvise (right and far right), a halter was less of a mystery than it might have been.



A simple but effective temporary halter can be improvised when a horse has been lassoed by the neck. When the horse has settled, a loop is created in the lasso's shank by taking a couple of twists around the lasso behind the lower jaw and then slipping the loop created over the nose to act as a noseband.



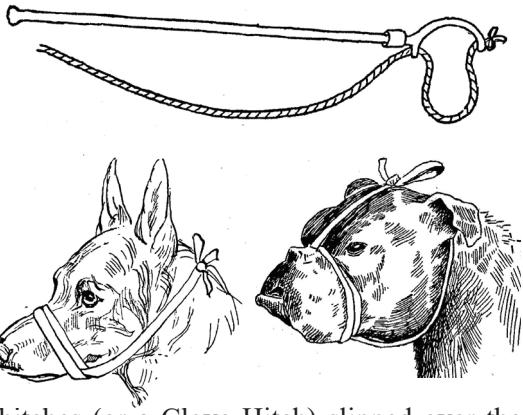
To prevent a webbing halter tightening when a horse is tied up, a half hitch can be applied as shown (left).



The method of tying a halter

1 For the drawings, I am indebted to the various artists whose work illustrated my copy of a standard textbook which underpinned the teaching of animal husbandry in the first year of a five-year course, over several decades. *Practical Animal Husbandry* Miller & Robertson 5th Edition 1947 Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh.

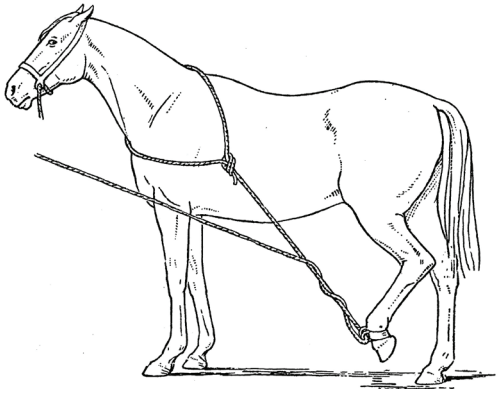
rope to a ring will be familiar to any highwayman today.The rather crude but reasonably effective implement to catch an 'unruly' dog or cat had many 'home-made' variants. It was important to make the animal secure manually as soon as possible after catching it, to reduce the chance of strangulation. The cord needed to be strong and not too flexible. The modern versions of this equipment use the same principle but are rather more sophisticated.

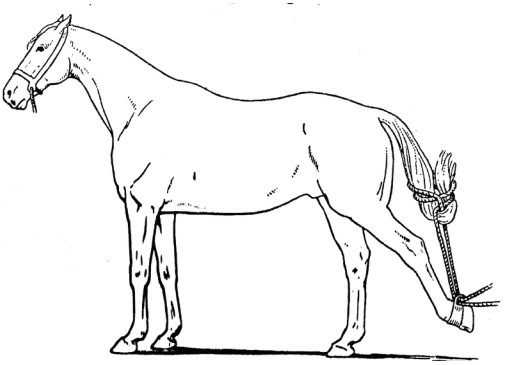


Still in use, for certain, are the methods by which to avoid a dog biting during an examination. A length of bandage (or in my day, a pyjama cord, perhaps they still exist) was middled and two half hitches (or a Clove Hitch) slipped over the nose from behind and pulled tight under the nose (only enough to stop the jaws opening). The two ends were taken back either side of the face and secured in a reef bow behind the ears. With short-nosed breeds, the hitches were tightened on top of the nose and the ends secured over the top of the head to the dog's collar. This was less satisfactory, and some care was necessary to avoid impeding the dog's already compromised breathing.

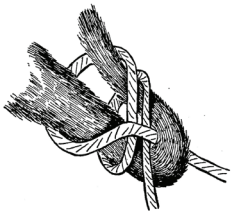
As a protective instinct, horses usually kick backwards with their hind legs. Though many of them didn't require it, to prevent them kicking during an examination (while taking the rectal temperature for example), the handler would lift up a flexed front leg, preferably on the side on which the examiner was standing. Sometimes it would be necessary to use a so-called Side-line.

With the front leg lifted, a shackle or strap was applied around the pastern (between the hoof and the fetlock) of a hind leg. A large loop created in a long rope by a Figure of Eight knot was placed over the horse's neck, and the rope threaded through the shackle on the back leg, twisted around itself two or three turns as it was led forward. It was either pulled forward by a handler in front or, after being passed through the neck loop, pulled by a handler to the side, which offered a little more control.

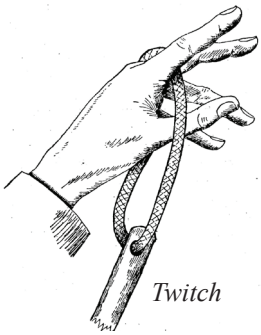




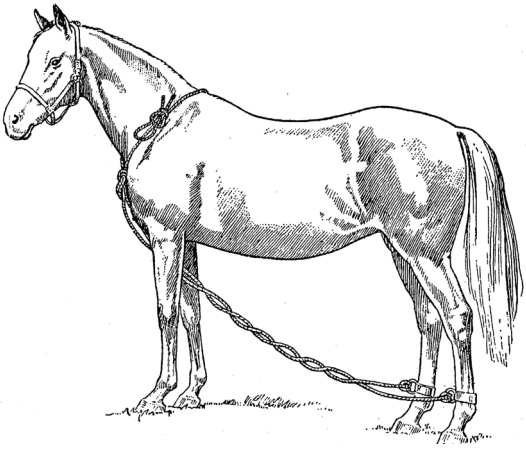
A variant which I'm pleased to say I never witnessed, and doesn't seem likely to be very effective, is interesting only in one particular, the use of a Double Sheet Bend to secure the rope to the horse's tail.



A common means by which to distract a horse from a mildly painful procedure, still in use today, was the use of a twitch. This comprised a loop of soft cord (for mine I made a braid) which was tied through a hole in the end of a strong stick, often a 2ft length of broom handle (mine was about 12in of the T-handle of an old spade). The loop was applied over the horse's top lip and the handle quickly twisted, putting pressure on the lip which drew the horse's attention away from whatever was else going on. It was seldom resented.

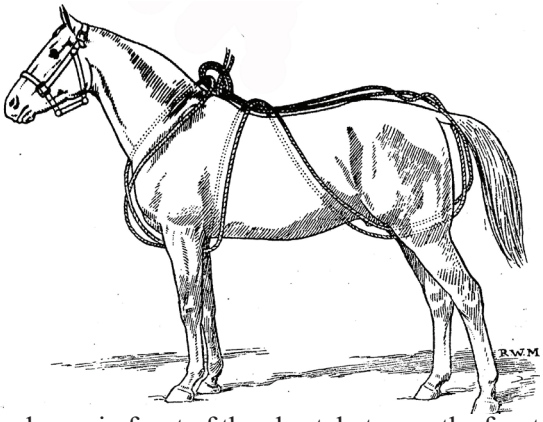


Twitch



A particular need was to restrain a mare from kicking the stallion when she was being covered. Particularly if she wasn't 'ready' to be served, a mare would often kick with both hind legs at once.

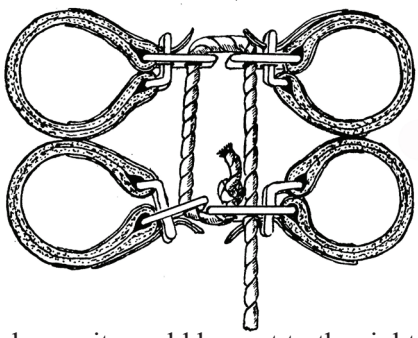
Covering hobbles, two leather shackles, were placed above the fetlocks of the hind legs. Each was attached to a rope running forward. The ropes were twisted together and led between the front legs where they were joined by a flat Figure of Eight knot to lie on the front of the chest before being passed around the neck and knotted. No tension was needed on the ropes, but if the mare attempted to kick, she was restrained by the pressure on the knot on the chest.



If a horse was completely unable to rise, it was occasionally necessary, in emergency, to use a long rope (over 30ft) to attach it to a lifting device (eg the fore-end loader of a tractor).

The rope was doubled and placed over the neck in front of the withers. With several strong helpers and some difficulty with a heavy horse, the ends were led over the shoulders, crossed over in front of the chest, between the front legs, up over the chest wall and crossed behind the withers. They were then led down again over the flanks and between the hind legs, up either side of the tail, then crossed several times, passing under the ropes already placed over the back, before being attached to the original loop at the withers. The ropes needing adjusting carefully, once laid, to reduce undue chafing, and the attachment point for hoisting was where the ropes crossed over the back. Because of the pressure on the horse's chest, it needed to be suspended for as little time as possible.

For surgical procedures which could not be undertaken with the equine or bovine standing, they needed to be 'cast' (laid down).[2] For horses there were various different methods, mostly using hobbles (heavy gauge leather straps with metal buckles and strong metal loops attached) of which several models were made.

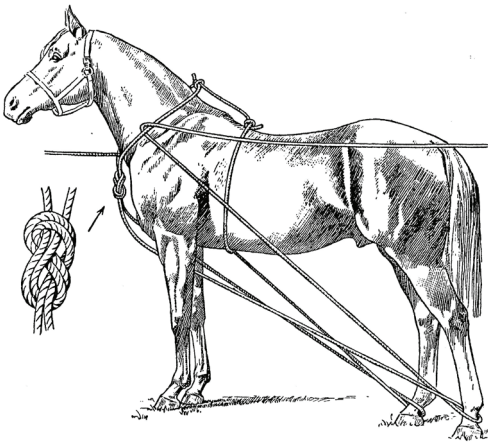


In one commonly used method, a hobble was attached to each pastern and the loops joined by a strong rope. The order in which the hobbles were linked depended on which side the horse was to be cast. As shown, it would be cast to the right. At a given signal, the horse was pushed backwards, a strong sustained pull applied to the rope forced the legs together, and the horse was pulled over. At the same time, a rope looped over the forearm and across the withers was pulled by an assistant on the side which the horse would lie on. Strong, experienced operators on the halter and the tail were essential to avoiding damage to the horse. Once down, ropes were needed to secure the horse in the position needed for the particular surgical procedure.

2 With the advent of the early anaesthetics, they could be used in conjunction with casting. As they became more sophisticated there was no need for casting with ropes at all.

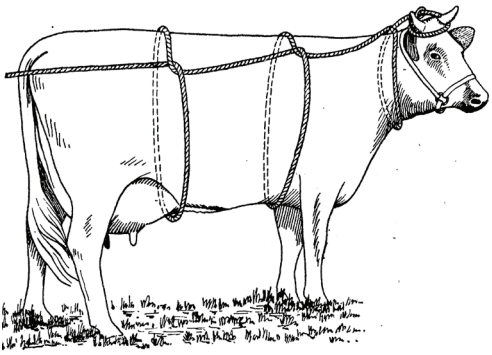
In my first year of training, an old grey mare which was used to teach casting to succeeding generations was so resigned to her fate, bless her, that she would obligingly lie down at the appropriate time rather than risk falling over. It saved a lot of pulling, but was not much good for preparing us for 'reality'!

In some circumstances, with unbroken colts, for example, Side-lines were used, which involved only ropes; it would have been impossible to apply hobbles. Again, several assistants were needed. Once the rope was middled and placed and knotted round the neck in front of the chest (note the Figure of Eight knot), the long ends needed to be applied round the hind legs from a distance, well away from the colt's heels. It took some experience and skill to get the colt to kick to allow the leg rope to be slipped up between the thighs, before later being allowed to drop to the pasterns just before they were pulled. The drawing shows how the rope was deployed. As the ropes were pulled,the horse was backed, which forced it to sit and it was then turned onto its side.



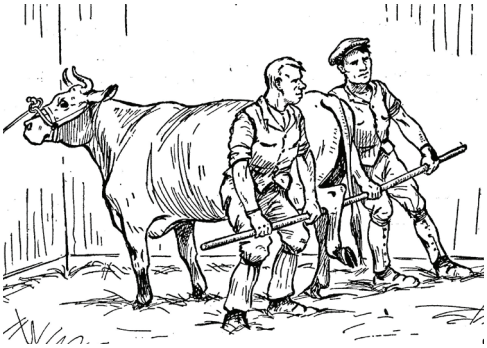
Casting cattle was a different matter, in many respects much simpler than in horses. It lasted later into the 20th century, as anaesthesia in cattle was developed much later than for equines.

The most common technique was known as Reuff's method. The diagram shows the rope starting with a noose around the horns. Even by the 1960s, horns were much rarer on adult cattle, and a fixed loop (often a Bowline) was placed round the neck in the position of the first half hitch in the sketch. Then two hitches were added, one just behind the front legs and the second in front of the udder in a female, or the equivalent position in a male, and the rope led straight behind to one or more assistants who maintained tension on the rope, rather than simply pulling it.



The front and back hitches were then tightened in turn by the veterinary surgeon, front hitch then back hitch, front then back, with the assistant taking up the slack as soon as it was available, until the animal sank to the ground from the

pressure on its spine. Tension on the long end had to be maintained until the animal had been secured as appropriate for whatever procedure was necessary. Reuff's method was still often employed in conjunction with the early use of anaesthesia. For most abdominal procedures, it was preferable to operate on the animal in the standing position under local and regional anaesthesia. Local anaesthetics had been available for decades. Cattle tend to kick forwards, which



I have included this rather quaint drawing only to illustrate the use of knotted baler cord to keep a man's trouser bottoms out of the mud or dung, when he wasn't equipped with breeches and leather gaiters such as his sensible colleague is wearing.

I never used this method of presenting a cow's hind foot for examination. Firstly, because there was unlikely to be enough people on any farm to assist like this, but mostly because the position of the man on the cow's left was where I wanted to be to properly examine the left hind foot. Instead, I devised a rope (right) which could be used to raise a cow's leg running over a ceiling beam above it and which, by the cunning incorporation of an integral cleat (Clamcleat®), didn't require another person to maintain it in the raised position. When cattle crushes began to be available on farm, the rope could run over the top back bar of the crush, so there was no need for a beam.

Rope runs up over beam
Rope runs down from beam
Clamcleat allows rope to travel only downwards
Rope pulled downwards and jammed in Clamcleat when leg is at the right height
Brass snap-shackle attached to strap around cow's leg above hock

The Pepper Footrope

Heat Shrink Tubing

by Mike Provart

Conventional Whippings

There are many ways to secure and prepare the ends of strands, cordage, ropes etc in order to carry out other tasks. Some are shown here (right).

And then the handy cable tie

Cable ties are known by many different names including zip tie, marker cable ties, wire tie, zipper tie, wirewrap, hose tie, rat belt, mouse belt, and the original brand name Ty-Rap. For more money they can be quick release and therefore reusable.

Heat shrink solution

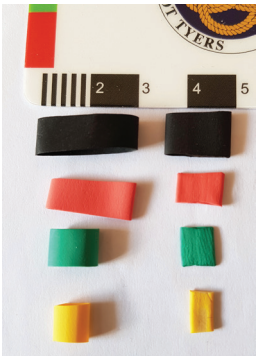
There may be times when you need to quickly and 'permanently' (nothing is permanent with a sharp knife or wire cutters!) secure the strands of a rope or prevent a rope from untwisting, and also times when securing ends is not the prime goal and a fast reliable way would come in handy.

There is a plastic tube on the market that shrinks when heated with a lighter or hot air gun that is used in the electronics and electrical industry. My hair dryer works, slowly compared to a lighter, but it works and is safe. The tubing is tough, very cheap, readily available, easily cut to size and can be bought in a variety of colours. I paid less than £5 for a large variety of sizes and colours. One of the many sources is at:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/dragonaur-home-decor-8-Size-Assortment-Sleeving/dp/B08N4W21M9/ref=sr_1_24?_encoding=UTF8&c=ts&dchild=1&keywords=Heat-Shrink+Tubing&qid=1615906924&s=industrial&sr=1-24&ts_id=10256618031 (https://tinyurl.com/4ze9zf4j)

This pack of 328 pieces is available. 120pcs @ 1.0x40mm, 60pcs @ 2.0x40mm, 40pcs @ 3.0x40mm, 32pcs @ 4.0x40mm, 24pcs @ 6.0x40mm, 20pcs @ 8.0x80mm, 16pcs @ 10.0x80mm, 16pcs @ 14.0x80mm.

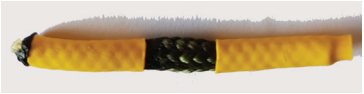
Sizes Cold and Shrunk



This shows various sizes when cold and then shrunk and when flattened the ratio of cold to hot is about 1.5:1. The actual diameters are different and I assume that shrinkage varies with material and supplier, although I have never used any tubing that didn't have substantial shrinkage.

If the flat width (cold or shrunken) of the tube is W, then the actual diameter D of the tubing is $2W/\pi$ which is equal to 7W/11 or about 0.64W, which is 0.5% accurate.

The image in the picture (right) is of a piece of paracord terminated with the end showing, and the end hidden.



Unless the tubing is shrunk to its maximum or was too large to start with, it can be pulled off or come off with frequent handling. So common sense is needed in selection and care when making complex knots like the Manrope knot etc.

A Fid can be useful when feeding single or multiple strands.

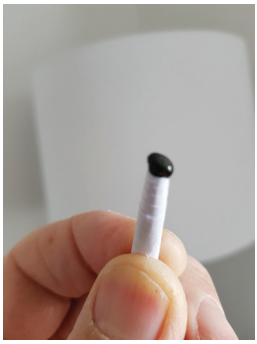
The next picture show a 3-strand natural rope, having had the strands terminated, being fed using a fid into a much larger tube.

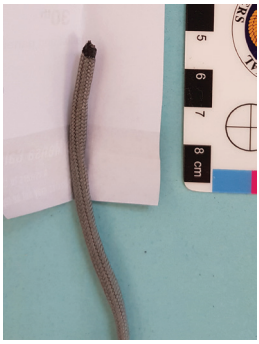
Another simple way to feed the tubing.

A small roll of paper is fast and free. It is a tad more fiddly to master than the Swedish fid.

NB A small but slightly thicker roll of paper is a great way of sealing any man-made materials that melt easily.

Roll the paper around the item and tighten by continuing to roll in the direction of the lay. Pull the cord until the end to be sealed is near the end of the paper tube. Melt the cord and pull into or slowly through the tube. You will then have a neat end and no burned fingers.



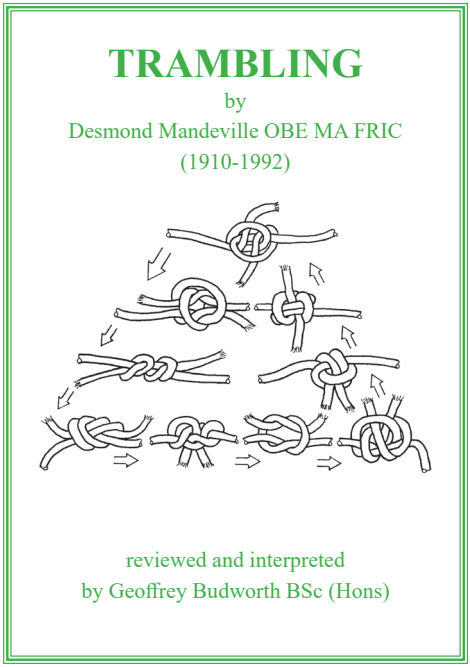


PUBLICATIONS GROUP

As *Knotting Matters* goes to press, the new book *Trambling* by Desmond Mandeville reviewed and interpreted by Geoffrey Budworth is currently at the printers.

More details will be available in the next edition of *KM*, in the meantime keep your eyes on the IGKT website for when the first copies will be available from our Supplies Secretary.

Now that this edition of *KM* is out of the way, work is underway to get the celebration collection of *KM* articles on THs ready for the printers.

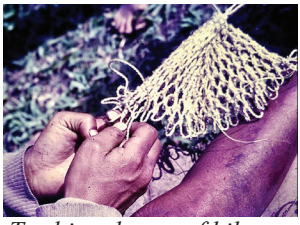


Bilums and Knotting Matters

by Philip and Dorcas Noble

I am so grateful to Frank Brown for his article about bilums and beanies in *KM* 150. It brought back many memories of my family's ties, as missionaries, in the Northern District of Papua, in the mid 1970s.

The region was very remote and rural and the main clothing was still tapa cloth, made from tree bark, which of course had no pockets, so bilum bags were essential for all sorts of practical purposes. Smaller ones were worn round the necks of the men and hung on their chests. These were used for essentials such as betel nuts, small gourds containing lime and a short cassowary leg bone for drawing out the lime powder. These smaller bags tended to have more colour added to the strings. This would generally be by using traditional dyes of reds and browns, but by the 1970s the use of brightly coloured, so called 'trade-store dye', was increasingly being used.



Tradtional start of bilum

Larger, plainer bilums were mainly used by women for practical purposes. The carrying bands were designed to be worn around the forehead and the bilum hung down the back, carrying anything from large loads such as firewood to root vegetables.

Sleeping babies were also commonly carried around in large plain bilums lying flat. On arrival at a house, the bilum with the baby in it would be hung up on a hook and the bag given a gentle push, an ideal method of rocking the little ones off to sleep.

The making process began with gathering the long fibres of specific plants and then rolling these on the thigh to twist into longer strings. Once the desired length was reached, the string was wound into a hank around the fingers of the right hand and secured by winding the string round the hank middle.

The tool used for the knotting method was quite ingenious. The metal frame of

an old umbrella was broken up and one of the upper spokes which had a point at one end and a hole for the original rivet at the other was used as a needle. Regular spacing was a matter of great practice.

I came home with a selection of bilum bags as gifts for myself and family. We find them very useful for all sorts of purposes from shopping to holding materials for various crafts.

Moving on to 2006, my daughter Dorcas and her doctor husband worked on a mission station in the Fly River district in the South West corner of PNG. She became fascinated with the bilum-making skills of the women and got to know several expert bilum makers who taught her how to make some of these wonderful objects, so her experience might be of interest.

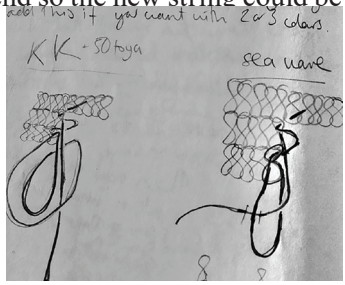
Making modern bilum

Dorcas's first bilum

Her daughters' first bilums

The bilums that she saw being made were part of a much more recent tradition, and very similar to the ones from the previous article, generally made from highly coloured synthetic materials available in local markets and shops.

My daughter points out that rather than splicing the ends together when starting a new colour, the ends of the strings are rolled together on the thigh. The double twisted string always had different lengths at the end so the new string could be added neatly. These give a nice interwoven effect.



Patterns have become more and more dramatic, colourful and complex, in recent years, designs having names such as 'carrot' or 'ocean wave' or 'KK'. She showed me some pages from her notebook showing the knot method used to produce some of the more complex designs.

The more elaborate bilum bags, often with lettering, have additional features added by stitching and appliqué.

While the traditional bags are made from bush string, coloured nylon wool is generally preferred for modern designs, though bags can be made from any material that can be formed into a string.

Some of the most interesting bilums are made from unusual materials such as plastic string (right) and even one from the twisted hair of a small possum known as a Cuscus.(below)

A nice story about my daughter who was sitting on a porch talking to two young student doctors who were visiting on a placement. She was rolling string for a bilum on her thigh, when one of the students asked, “Excuse me do you find that that is effective?” It turned out she was thinking that the ‘poor’ missionary was trying out a primitive method for removing hair from the legs

Beanie Hats.

The ‘beanies ‘(hats) that I have seen all come from the New Guinea Highlands, which tend to be much colder in the morning and such snug small hats are highly prized. These are made from rectangles of material twice the width of the required hat and finished off with a thick row of double knotting. The strip is then folded in two and stitched along the top and the open side and turned inside out.

Elaborate modern bilum

We want to thank all our friends in PNG who took time to share with us, teach us and so generously present us with such a wonderful selection of bilums.

Making a Mini Ditty Bag

by Ewa Thormählen

I found the English names of the knots in this article in *ABOK,* but as it took some detective work, I decided to see if you can do the reverse. In Sweden, knots have *very different names*! Find some help at the end of the article.

In 1987, we started a knotting club in our home harbour, Lagunen in Malmö, and we met every Wednesday evening during wintertime. We had all been sailing friends for a long time, were very interested in knotting and wished to learn more. Two of the members were skilled in knotting and sewing. First of all we had to learn how to tie belts in macramé and after that we could do whatever we wished. I got stuck with covering bottles, since it was very handy in our sailing boat. After a couple of years we started the big project: sewing ditty bags, and that was thirty years ago.

Small ditty bag

I would like to show you how I made the small one because I think that many members of IGKT probably already have done a normal-sized ditty bag and I am sure that all of you are much more skilled than I am. At the end of the article there are some pictures of the big ditty bag that will show how the small one is done, it is easier to see the details on the bigger one.

I really like to do miniatures amongst other things, for me it is the challenge to see if it is possible. The small ditty bag is a 'copy' of the big one except for the knots and I did it about ten years ago. It was like sewing a *fingerborg*!

Small Ditty Bag : Height 1.2 in (3cm)
Base diameter 0.88 in (2.2cm).

This is what I used. What you can't see is the most important item: patience! The cloth is pleated five times which helps hide the joint when you sew it together (circumference 3.3 in (8cm) and the height 2 in (5cm).

Small ditty bag with the equipment used

For the base you also need a round piece. The fringe is already prepared in light cotton, as you can see. I used sewing thread and normal needles for the tiny stitches. For the lanyards I used very thin hemp yarn and I tied a *platting med tre parter* and I did two *valknopar* (30/6 cotton) on the handle. The base is decorated with a *lagd ring* or *lagd stropp* (The 'rope' is 0.08 in (2mm) tarred hemp). Of course I made the *kaus* myself, out of a very tiny piece of a beer can.

The lagd ring or lagd stropp ditty bag. Height 10 in (25cm) Base 8 in (20cm) diameter

Big ditty bag

One needs quite different tools for the big one! And it is much tougher to sew!

The other knots I used on the big one were on the lanyard, *fyrkantsplatting* with *stjärnknopar* and the handle is covered in *tränsning*, two patterns on top of the sinnet. There are two *valknopar* (12/9, cotton) on the handle as well, see image on p 41.

Big ditty bag and the equipment used

The inside of the big ditty bag has a secret. It is a pocket flap with my monogram in macramé. Well, I did the bag 30 years ago!

I use my big ditty bag almost every day! The small one is sitting in a display case and I must say that I am proud of them both! If I had not done the big one, I certainly would not have had the skill to do the small one. Though it was great fun to do them both!

Small ditty bag with tools

Big Ditty Bag with contents from above

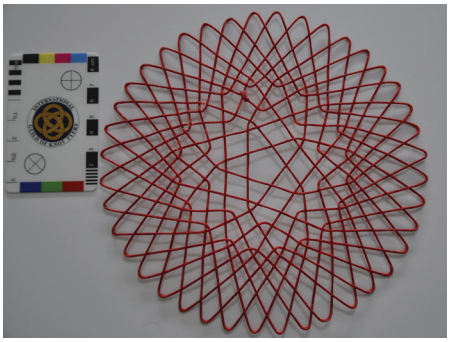
If any of you has made a small ditty bag, would you be prepared to share a photo of it? ewathormahlen@gmail.com

Vocabulary

Swedish	English
Fingerborg	Sewing thimble
Platting med tre parter	Three-strand Plait
Valknopar	Turks Heads
Lagd ring/stropp	Rope grommet
Kaus	Thimble (for Eye splice)
Fyrkantsplatting	Square plaiting
Stjärnknopar	Star knots

Gold Knotting

by Norbert Trupiano



The knot I made in December 2019, its particularity is the five-pointed star in the centre.

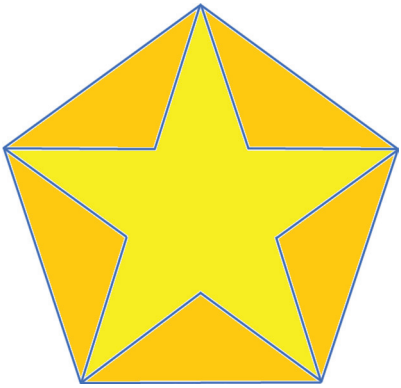
Initially, I just wanted a star to decorate the top of my Christmas tree. As usual, I worked empirically around a 5B cylindrical knot and came up with a multiple-of-five knot, which I tie flat to finally achieve this result.

That day I was struck by the result of my work and couldn't get over my luck in coming up with exactly what I wanted, a five-pointed star for the top of my tree. Even today, this star still fascinates me.

As usual, I wanted to name my knot, as I do every time I create a new one that is not described in ABOK. I wanted to call it the Christmas knot. Come on!

I wanted to know why this knot fascinated me so much, what could be more mundane than a five-pointed star? I then remembered a discovery I had made while walking on a Moroccan beach, I had picked up a sea urchin skeleton, the inside of a sea urchin shell is pierced with tiny holes arranged towards the exterior in five equal portions, moreover, its beak is also made up of five jawbones arranged in a pentagon. Before eating them, sea urchin-eaters destroy the beak with a sharp knife!

If nature is able to create such structures, it is because it uses the same eternal principles of creation, divine proportions. The same divine proportions as are described by the Franciscan monk Luca Pacioli in his work De Divina Proportione illustrated by Leonardo da Vinci and published in 1509. In it he deals with mathematical proportion and its application in geometry, art and architecture. It of course refers to the golden mean: 1.618, used by the same Leonardo to proportion his works, both pictorial and sculptural.



In a five-pointed star inside a regular pentagon, the proportions are naturally in harmony with this Golden number.

All the triangles of this five-pointed star are golden isosceles triangles: the side-to-base ratio, or the reverse, is the golden ratio.

This figure is an inexhaustible reservoir of golden ratios.

The Golden Ratio, φ, is one of the two solutions to the equation $x2 – x – 1 = 0$

$$\varphi 1 = (1 + \sqrt{5}) / 2 = 1.618$$

This is why I named my knot the ‘Gold knot’.

You can learn more about numbers, maths and other curiosities: http://villemin.gerard.free.fr/

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1 φ (Phi) in honour of the Greek sculptor Phidias who decorated the facade of the Parthenon in Athens where the golden mean is used, in particular with the statue of Athena.

Six Knot Challenge

by Des Pawson

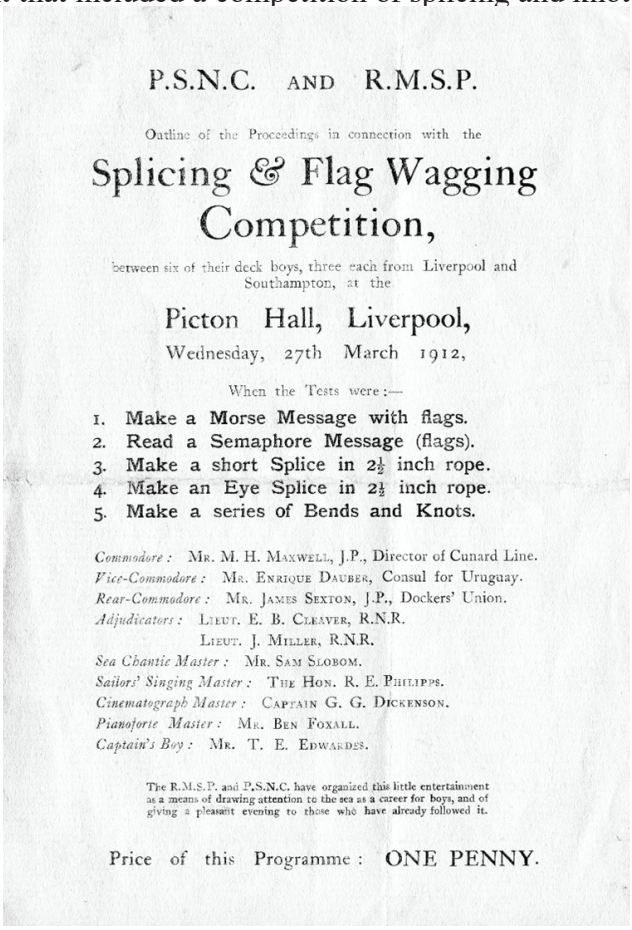
An Early Version?

On the 27th of March 1911, at the Picton Hall, Liverpool, there was an evening's entertainment that included a competition of splicing and knot tying between cadets from the Pacific Steam Navigation Co and the Royal Mail Steam Packet.

The competition was accompanied by music including sea shanties, from the Navy League Band. Later there were films, one of which was on ropemaking.[1]

Afterwards, there was a Sailors' Voluntary Competition involving singing, dancing and the bo'sun's whistle.

The evening's events were watched by the great and good of maritime Liverpool.



P.S.N.C. AND R.M.S.P.

Outline of the Proceedings in connection with the

Splicing & Flag Wagging Competition,

between six of their deck boys, three each from Liverpool and Southampton, at the

Picton Hall, Liverpool,

Wednesday, 27th March 1912,

When the Tests were:—

1. Make a Morse Message with flags.
2. Read a Semaphore Message (flags).
3. Make a short Splice in 2½ inch rope.
4. Make an Eye Splice in 2½ inch rope.
5. Make a series of Bends and Knots.

Commodore: Mr. M. H. Maxwell, J.P., Director of Cunard Line.
Vice-Commodore: Mr. Enrique Dauber, Consul for Uruguay.
Rear-Commodore: Mr. James Sexton, J.P., Dockers' Union.
Adjudicators: Lieut. E. B. Cleaver, R.N.R.
Lieut. J. Miller, R.N.R.
Sea Chantie Master: Mr. Sam Slobom.
Sailors' Singing Master: The Hon. R. E. Philipps.
Cinematograph Master: Captain G. G. Dickenson.
Pianoforte Master: Mr. Ben Foxall.
Captain's Boy: Mr. T. E. Edwardes.

The R.M.S.P. and P.S.N.C. have organized this little entertainment as a means of drawing attention to the sea as a career for boys, and of giving a pleasant evening to those who have already followed it.

Price of this Programme: ONE PENNY.

1 *Rope Making By Hand In Kent* The film, which probably lasted about six minutes, was produced by Urbanora. It was actually released in November 1911. The description at the British Film Institute is *Making Three Inch Ropes*.

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Solent - UK

http://igkt-solent.co.uk
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Tel: +44 (0)2392 601 779
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Surrey - UK

www.surreyknots.org.uk
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North American Branch - Mid-Atlantic Region - USA

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Pacific Americas - USA

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All branch details as on IGKT website on 24/05/24

BACK COVER: SEAM RUBBER BY MIKKO SNELLMAN **SEE P 18**

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